



Annual Report
UPON THE
Public Health & Sanitary Conditions
OF THE
URBAN DISTRICT
OF
LEIGHTON BUZZARD
FOR THE YEAR
1937

BY
JONATHAN GROGONO, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,
Medical Officer of Health.

TO THE LEIGHTON BUZZARD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I beg to present the Annual Report for the year 1937.

Copies of this Report, as you are aware, must be sent to the Ministry of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	2487
Population (estimated to middle of 1937)					7004		
Number of inhabited houses (1937)	...				2126		
Rateable value	...	...	...	...	£38,697
Sum represented by penny rate	...				£153		
Live Births	<div><div>Total.</div><div>M.</div><div>F.</div></div> <div><div>Legitimate</div><div>Illegitimate</div></div> <div><div>88</div><div>3</div><div>51</div><div>2</div><div>37</div><div>1</div></div>			Birth Rate (R.G.)	13.00		
Still Births	<div><div>Total.</div><div>M.</div><div>F.</div></div> <div><div>Legitimate</div><div>Illegitimate</div></div> <div><div>3</div><div>0</div><div>2</div><div>0</div><div>1</div><div>0</div></div>			Rate per 1000 total births	33.3		
Deaths	102	57	45	Death Rate	14.58

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

No. of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth Nil

Deaths of Infants under one year old:

Legitimate, 6; Illegitimate, 0; Total, 6.

Rate per 1000 births, 66.

Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Scarlet Fever (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Diphtheria (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
„ „ Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	11

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

MEDICAL.

A part-time Medical Officer is employed, together with a Sanitary Inspector and Veterinary Meat Inspector. An assistant Sanitary Inspector was appointed in August.

HOSPITALS.

All infectious cases sent away for isolation were treated at the Dunstable and District Isolation Hospital, the cases being removed by the Hospital's own ambulance in accordance with the County Scheme.

17 cases of Infectious Disease were treated during the year, 15 of the cases being sent to Dunstable in accordance with the above scheme; 2 cases were isolated and nursed at home.

Patients with Tuberculosis can attend at the Dispensary, which is conveniently held at Luton, and they can be admitted to the Mogerhanger Sanatorium.

Venereal cases can be treated at the Bute Hospital, Luton, and the County Hospital, Bedford.

By arrangement of the County Council cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum can be sent to St. Margaret's Hospital, London, S.W.1, for treatment.

There is a St. John motor ambulance available, at a local garage, which is a great convenience and comfort in the removal of special or accident cases to the hospitals.

There are three permanently resident midwives in the town. A Health Visitor also visits the homes and gives instruction and advice.

Specimens and swabs are sent to the Clinical Research Association for microscopic and bacteriological examination.

The Council grants supplies of Antitoxin and Scarlet Fever Serum.

An Infant Welfare Centre is conducted in the town, a lady Health Visitor being present each week. She is assisted by the local nurse and several ladies in the town. A medical officer also attends. It is a very popular centre.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT. WATER SUPPLY.

The town is at present supplied with water from a well situated near the southern boundary of the town. The well is sunk to a depth of 60 feet and lined with cast-iron sections bolted together. The boring, 8in. in diameter, is sunk a further 140 feet into the lower greensand. The rest level of the water at the end of December, 1937, was 53ft. below ground level, being one foot higher than last year.

The pumps are two sets of three throw ordinary lift pumps, the barrels being 7in. in diameter with a stroke of 20 inches. They are driven by two 25 h.-p. gas engines run on town gas. Their capacity is about 9,000 gallons per hour. The water is filtered for the extraction of iron by three pressure filters, each 8 feet in diameter, which removes the iron very efficiently.

The town is supplied with water from the concrete reservoir on Shenley Hill, which is about 2 miles from the pumping station, and is 410 feet O.D. The water supply is adequate, of good quality, and perfectly satisfactory for drinking purposes, as proved by a bacteriological and chemical analysis each year.

The town has a reserve of water equal to $2\frac{1}{2}$ days' supply.

The scheme for increasing the supply of water is now well in hand, a new 24in. diameter bore hole has been sunk to a depth of 210 feet near the site of the existing bore hole and a supply of 12,000 gallons per hour was obtained on test.

The report received on the bacteriological and chemical analysis of a sample of water taken from the new bore hole was quite satisfactory.

The new plant will consist of a vertical spindle, five stage, 6in. diameter centrifugal pump, driven by a 30 h.-p. electric motor, and the old pumps and bore hole will be maintained in reserve for an alternative supply.

It is estimated that the new plant will be in use early in July, 1938.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The Sewerage of the District is on the " Separate System " and the sewage from the low lying parts of the town is lifted by four sets of ejectors to the main sewers which gravitate to the Sewage Disposal Works.

The sewage is treated at the Sewage Disposal Works by means of Settling Tanks, three 74ft. diameter clinker filters and two Humus Tanks.

SCAVENGING.

The Scavenging is carried out by the Urban District Council, and each home is visited once a week.

The Council's Scheme for the disposal of house refuse by the method known as controlled tipping is working most satisfactorily.

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS.

No complaints have been received during the year with regard to the pollution of rivers and streams.

DISINFECTION.

A stock of disinfectants is kept at the Council's Store Yard, West Street, and the public can have a full supply on application, of which they take advantage.

During the summer months the street gullies are flushed and dustbins are sprinkled with disinfectants. Premises are always disinfected after cases of infectious disease, and after deaths from tuberculosis.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There is now only one common lodging house in the district, which is kept in a clean and satisfactory condition.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There is only one offensive trade in the district, that being a knacker's yard, which is quite away from the town.

SCHOOLS.

The Elementary Schools of the town are as follows:—

Beaudesert: Senior Boys and Mixed Infants.

Bassett Road: Senior Girls.

Pulford: Junior Boys.

St. Andrew's: Junior Girls.

The sanitary accommodation is sufficient and in good order

There is a Secondary School in the town for boys and girls, which is well provided with all sanitary arrangements,

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There is one swimming bath in the town situate in the grounds of the Cedars School for the use of the pupils and members of the staff. The bath is of modern construction and is provided with a proper purification plant.

There is a large natural swimming pool on the outskirts of the town which is open to the public but is privately owned. The surface of the pool covers an area of approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres and the water always appears to be in good condition. This pool is the headquarters of the Leighton Buzzard Swimming Club.

ERADICATION OF BED BUGS.

One house was found to be infested with bugs and was disinfested by spraying with an insecticide.

The method generally employed in the past for the disinfection of houses was by fumigation with "Cimex" Fumigators, the work being carried out by the Council's own Staff.

Although the result of this method has so far proved satisfactory, the cost has been rather excessive, due to refixing woodwork and the making good of plaster after the fumigation. In view of this the Council have made arrangements with a reputable firm of Fumigating Contractors to carry out all disinfection work, including the removal and fumigation of tenants' belongings to Council Houses in mobile fumigation chambers.

SHOPS.

There were 129 shops inspected under the Shops Act, 1934, and the conditions relating to ventilation, temperature and sanitary accommodation were found to be generally satisfactory.

The question of the provision or otherwise of sanitary conveniences at a few lock-up shops is at present under consideration.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES AND BAKE-HOUSES.

There are 8 slaughter-houses in the district. All are found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

There are 8 bake-houses in the district, one of which is underground.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The principal factories in the town which employ a considerable number of hands, are:—

Three agricultural iron works, three tile works, a concrete works, a cement works, brickworks, laundry, a large corset factory and a ladies' mantle factory. There are also the Gas Works and two flour mills.

The principal workshops are:—

Basket-makers, brushmakers, printers, dressmakers, tin-smiths, builders and saddlers. Many of the workshops on the register comprise domestic workshops, where only members of the family are employed.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

The Local Unemployment Bureau states that unemployment in Leighton Buzzard has been fairly low during the year. The average number of unemployed on its list during the year was 100, including both sexes.

HOUSING STATISTICS.

1. INSPECTION OF DWELLING-HOUSES DURING THE YEAR:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	118
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	287
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under subhead (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	86
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	242
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	26
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	59

2. REMEDY OF DEFECTS DURING THE YEAR WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICES:—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	22
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3. ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR:

A. Proceedings under sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ...	14
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners	7
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(b) By local authority in default of owners ...	Nil
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B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	Nil
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:

(a) By owners	Nil
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(b) By local authority in default of owners ...	Nil
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C. Proceedings under sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
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(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil
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D. Proceedings under section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	Nil
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(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	Nil
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4. HOUSING ACT, 1936.—OVERCROWDING.

A.	(1)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	29
	(2)	Number of families dwelling therein	...			32
	(3)	Number of persons dwelling therein	...			205
B.		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	Nil
C.	(1)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	23
	(2)	Number of persons concerned in such cases				149
Total number of new houses erected in 1936 classified as follows:						
		By the Local Authority	...	...	...	Nil
		By private enterprise	...	...	...	26

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.

1. GENERAL.

Number of Inspections	...	...	...	301
Complaints received	...	...	...	9
Nuisances detected without complaint	...			6
Notices served, informal	...	...	...	56
Notices served, statutory	...	...	...	Nil
Nuisances abated (a) by persons responsible				15
(b) by Council	...	...	...	Nil

2. HOUSE NUISANCES.

Roofs repaired	...	...	...	13
Guttering and rainwater pipes cleaned out or repaired	...	...	...	15
Dirty houses cleansed and distempered	...			11
Walls and ceilings repaired	...	...	...	26
Floors repaired	...	...	...	21
Ventilation improved	...	...	...	15
New sinks provided	...	...	...	4
External walls repaired	...	...	...	16
Pavements repaired	...	...	...	11
Other defects remedied	...	...	...	112

3. DRAINS, WATER CLOSETS, ETC.

New drains laid	...	...	...	6
Drains cleared or repaired	...	...	...	12
Water Closets repaired	...	...	...	12
Sanitary galvanized ashbins provided	...	...	...	9
Additional Water Closets provided	...	...	...	6
Privy Ashpits converted into Pail Closets	...	...	...	Nil
Pail Closets repaired	...	...	...	Nil

4. SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

Number on Register	...	...	...	8
Number of inspections	...	...	...	38
Number of defects found	...	...	...	4
Number remedied	...	...	...	4

5. BAKEHOUSES.

Number on Register	...	...	...	8
Number of inspections	...	...	...	34
Number of defects found	...	...	...	1
Number remedied	...	...	...	1

6. DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

Number of Dairymen or Purveyors of Milk	...	...	...	26
Number of Cowkeepers	...	...	...	5
Number of inspections	...	...	...	54
Number of defects found	...	...	...	4
Number remedied	...	...	...	4

7. FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Number on register	...	...	...	104
Number of inspections	...	...	...	106
Number of defects found	...	...	...	2
Number remedied	...	...	...	2

8. VARIOUS.

Removal of animals improperly kept	...	...	...	2
Visits to infected houses	...	...	...	17
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	17
Other items: One Common Lodging House	...	...	...
inspections	...	...	...	12

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK SUPPLY.

The milk supply is obtained from the Urban District and the Eaton Bray and Wing Rural Districts. Inspections of the supplies, premises and cowsheds have been made.

MEAT INSPECTOR'S REPORT.

Number of Inspections, 954.

CARCASSES CONDEMNED.

	CATTLE	SHEEP
All diseases except Tuberculosis		
Whole Carcases condemned		1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	
Tuberculosis only		
Whole Carcases condemned	8	
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	2	

CHEMICAL AND BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD.

Specimens for the Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of milk and food are sent to the Clinical Research Association.

A store is provided at the Council's Depot for the temporary storing of unsound meat.

An incinerator is in use for the destruction of unsound meat, and it is working satisfactorily.

MEASURES RELATING TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

DIPHTHERIA.

Five cases of Diphtheria were notified during the year. All cases were treated in hospital and made good recoveries.

SCARLET FEVER.

Eleven cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the year. Ten cases were treated in hospital. All made good recoveries.

PNEUMONIA (ALL FORMS).

Ten cases of Pneumonia (all forms) were notified during the year. Three of the cases proved fatal.

ENTERIC FEVER.—No cases notified.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Six cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified during the year. There were three deaths from this disease.

There were three cases of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified during the year.

ERYSIPELAS.

One case of Erysipelas was notified. It was isolated and nursed at home.

CHICKEN POX.

Chicken Pox continues to be officially notifiable. Four cases were notified during the year. These occurred in school children, but no complication ensued.

PUERPERAL FEVER.—No cases notified.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.—No cases notified.

Your Obedient Servant,

JONATHAN GROGONO,

Medical Officer of Health.

TABLE I.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1937 and previous Years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each Year.	TOTAL BIRTHS.				TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NET DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Live Births.		Still Births.		Number.	Rate.	of Non-Residents registered in the district.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Under 1 year of age		Number	Rate.
		Number.	Rate.	No.	Rate.					Rate per 1000 Nett Births.			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1931	7030*	104	14.8	2	0.28	91	12.9	17	16	1	9.6	90	12.8
1932	6933	103	14.9	4	0.58	85	12.3	17	19	1	9.7	87	12.5
1933	6950	83	11.98	4	0.57	89	12.9	6	10	5	56.0	93	13.4
1934	6898	100	14.49	2	0.29	82	11.8	10	20	4	40.0	92	13.3
1935	7200	89	12.31	0.0	0.0	81	11.25	9	16	7	78.6	90	12.5
1936	7200	93	13.75	3	0.42	109	15.14	4	26	6	60.6	131	18.2
1937	7004	91	13.00	3	0.40	92	13.15	10	19	6	66.0	101	14.43

* 1931 Census.

TABLE III.
Cases of Tuberculosis notified during 1937.

Age Periods.			New Cases.				Deaths.			
			Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
			M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	...						
1	...	...						
5	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	...
20	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
25	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
35	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
45	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	...
55	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...
65 upwards	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals	...	...	3	3	2	1	...	3	...	...

TABLE IV.
Causes of Death during Year 1937.

[illegible]

Infantile Mortality during the year 1937.

Nett Deaths from stated causes at various Ages
under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.			Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	2-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 month.	1-3 Months.	3-6 Months.	6-9 Months.	9-12 Months.	Total Deaths under 1 Year.
All Causes.	Certified	...	4	...	1	5	1	...	...	...	6
	Uncertified	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
{	Small-pox	...									
	Chicken-pox	...									
	Measles	...									
	Scarlet Fever	...									
	Whooping Cough	...									
	Diphtheria and Croup	...									
	Erysipelas	...									
{	Tuberculous Meningitis	...									
	Abdominal Tuberculosis	...									
	Other Tuberculous Diseases	...									
	Meningitis, <i>not Tuberculous</i>	...									
	Convulsions	...					1				1
	Laryngitis	...									
	Bronchitis	...									
	Pneumonia (all forms)	...									
{	Diarrhoea	...									
	Enteritis	...									
	Gastritis	...									
	Syphilis	...									
	Rickets	...									
	Suffocation, overlying	...									
	Injury at Birth	...									
	Atelectasis	...									
{	Congenital Malformations	...	2		1	3					3
	Premature Birth	...	2			2					2
	Atrophy, Debility and Marasmus	...									
	Violence	...									
	Accidental & Other Causes	...									
Totals ...			4		1	5	1				6

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Cases.			Vision unimpaired	Vision impaired.	Total Blindness.	Deaths.
	Notified.	Treated.					
		At Home.	In hospital				
Under one year.

